PROJECT MUSE®

Psychoanalysis, Reparation, and Historical Memory

Karl Figlio

AMERICAN

IMAGO

PSYCHOANALYSIS AND
THE HUMAN SCIENCES

→ For additional information about this article

KARL FIGLIO

Psychoanalysis, Reparation, and Historical Memory

Introduction: Psychoanalysts and Historians

In this paper, I will argue that remembering is a form of reparation and that there is a traduced form of remembering-as-manic-reparation.[1] They look the same, but reparation is based on concern for damage to the other, while manic reparation is based on narcissistic aggrandizement and contempt for the other. Remembering as reparation includes an awareness of an attack upon an object, which drives a reparative process. By contrast, remembering as manic reparation controls memory, one form of which is to recast it into a defensive, narcissistic memory organization.

Reparation is driven by guilt. To remember as reparation is to suffer guilt. It is also to be drawn into falsifying memory in order to avoid guilt: reparation can then take on a manic reparative coloring and symbols of reparation can become ambiguous as they become foci for different, conflicting groups. They can become enclaves of memories that differ from each other and depend on these differences. Each enclave can remember in its own way because another remembers differently, at the expense of a convergent memory. Symbols of remembering, such as memorials, are sites of ambivalence, representing both reparative and manic-reparative intentions, as well as intellectual, emotional, and political conflict.

I will address the problem of remembering and repairing through an analysis of ambivalence in German memory of the Nazi period, which is expressed through reparation distorted by its apparent near-kin, manic reparation. Sites of remembering portray this ambivalent reparative intention and gather

conflicting views and factions around them. To make this case, I will clarify the concepts of reparation, manic reparation, introjective identification, and projective identification. I align reparation with introjective identification and manic reparation with projective identification.

Germany after 1945 has struggled to assimilate this past, along with the guilt of the perpetrator, into its collective memory. The so called *Historikerstreit*, or historian's struggle, over national history, identity, and pride in post-Holocaust Germany, was a public debate over whether it could bear the burden of the past and integrate the Nazi period into its collective memory, or whether it had to fall into isolated enclaves of distorted memory, which avoided this heavy weight of responsibility (Figlio, 2011; Maier, 1988, pp. 9–16, 50-61, 90; for documentation, see Knowlton & Cates, 1993). It was precipitated by U.S. President Ronald Reagan's visit, arranged with the conservative Chancellor Helmut Kohl, to Bergen-Belsen and to the German military base in Bitburg, in the Federal Republic of Germany, on May 5, 1985 (for documentation, see Hartman, 1986). Meant to commemorate Germany's redemption as a normal nation, the event included victims of the Holocaust, but also Germany's fallen soldiers and members of the SS, as supposed freedom fighters against communism. The inclusive commemoration implied a moral equivalence between the SS and the Jews, which would seem to cancel the debt to the victims of the Nazis. The event unleashed fury on all sides. In liberal and Jewish eyes, it was evidence of anti-Semitism, while to German nationalists, it finally recognized their seething antipathy to Germany's continuing moral debt, which they saw as victimization. Though diminishing, this conflict remains today (Niven, 2006).

In the background to the *Historikerstreit*, two well-established historians of Germany, Ernst Nolte and Andreas Hillgruber, provoked controversy and a reply from the philosopher Jürgen Habermas. Nolte (1986/1993) claimed that Hitler's model for mass murder was the 'Asiatic deed' of the Russian revolution and civil war, a repetition of which against Germany he aimed to defeat. Hillgruber (1986) made the claim that historical methodology required the historian to identify with the object,

including German soldiers on the horrific Eastern front. Historians of this orientation also claimed that scholarship should be free to explore every aspect of the Nazi period, including German suffering, and that, by its own progress, historical research would work towards settling the differences between conflicting views of concerned groups, such as Holocaust survivors. Others, beginning with Habermas, opposed what they saw to be a relativizing and dismissal of the Nazi crime, and countered it with the moral imperative to remember deeply (Eley, 1988; Knowlton & Cates, 1993; for a debate between the historians Martin Broszat and Saul Friedländer, see Broszat & Friedländer, 1988).

There is, of course, an understandable empathy for German suffering, but it shades imperceptibly into establishing an equivalence of suffering between Jews as a people and Germans as a people. In isolation from the historical, motivational, and moral context, one suffering comes closer to that of another: in the de-contextualized extreme, they become identical. For the extreme German nationalist, German victimhood endorsed the renunciation of any debt to the Jews by literally and concretely equating German suffering with the Holocaust (Baranowski, 2011, pp. 186–187, 202; Bartov, 1998; Bergmann, 1997, p. 27; Legge, 2003, p. 124; Niven, 2006; Weil, 1997, pp. 114–115). In this extreme, the German victim could become a nationalist who argued that the Holocaust did not create an enduring claim for reparation, and that the time had come to put aside guilt for it and for Germany to re-join the community of normal nations (Panayi, 2001). Here is Bitburg, taken into public debate.

The *Historikerstreit* was just one episode in the struggle over memory, but it was an epochal moment when the morally laden presumptions in historical scholarship were brought into an open forum. It was, therefore, a cameo of the conflicted memory of the Nazi period.

In my view, the *Historikerstreit* is a kind of memorial, perhaps concretely located in Bitburg, but then transferred to the virtual space of public debate in the press and in collected contributions (Hartman, 1986; Knowlton & Cates, 1993). It begins as a site for remembering, centered on a physical object, a monument. But, following Noam Lupu (2003) and James Young

(1993), I differentiate memorials and memorialization from monuments. Monuments are material objects, which freeze memories, confining them into ideological portrayals; memorials are sites of remembering, often differently, by different groups, but around which remembering is alive and ongoing. Bitburg was closer to the former, the *Historikerstreit* to the latter.

Young writes, "Instead of allowing the past to rigidify in its monumental forms, we would vivify memory through the memory-work itself—whereby events, their recollection, and the role monuments play in our lives remain animate, never completed" (1993, p. 15). Perhaps the most profoundly evocative memorial sites are the Nazi concentration camps, which have been converted into memorial sites in which the monuments include the actual structures in the original camps. Young states:

> For Germans who experienced both the economic boom during Hitler's Reich and the destruction of their cities during the war, who knew both total military victory and unconditional surrender, memory of this time encompasses much more than the images of liberated concentration camp prisoners by which the era has so often been epitomized in America and England. Indeed, the piles of corpses in German camps ironically seemed to reflect back to many Germans their own total devastation, the masses of dead in German cities and on the front. At first, the German's only nexus of identification with Jewish victims lay in the destruction they now seemed to share, not in what they had wrought in Hitler's name. (p. 56)

At these sites, therefore, there are at least three groups of memories: of the Jews, of the Germans, and of the American and British allies. No doubt, the Germans could be divided into Nazi supporters, Nazi resisters and bystanders—and bystanders could be further divided into degrees of complicity with the Nazis.

Despite recognizing the groupings of "rememberers" at memorials, Young aims to "break down the notion of any memorial's 'collective memory' altogether, and to focus on 'collected memory', the many discrete memories that are gathered into common memorial spaces and assigned common meaning." He

argues that a "society's memory cannot exist outside of those people who do the remembering [and that] individuals cannot share another's memory…They share instead…the meanings in memory generated by [the] forms of memory" (p. xi).

I share his view, both that memorials vivify remembering while monuments tend to freeze memories into preconceived messages, and that individuals cannot in a literal sense share memories as specific experiences. His work provides extensive documentary material and analyses through which he demonstrates the wish in Germany in the decades after 1945 to evoke memory-work through memorials, rather than frozen, prescriptive messages. I differ with him, however, on two, related aspects of his interpretative stance. Firstly, he sets his case against "ascribing psychoanalytic terms to the memory of groups"; secondly, he rejects the "consequent tendency to see all the different kinds of memory in terms of memory-conflict and strategies for denial" (p. xi).

On the first point, regarding the idea of collective memory, the question as to the applicability of psychoanalytic interpretation is not whether individuals share a mind, in the sense that society as a whole can be viewed as a collective subject or agent. Rather, the question pertains to the ways in which individuals coalesce into imagined unities through group processes. Young's vocabulary points to just such a process of coalescing, for example in the phrases "socially constructed" (p. xi), "collective meaning" (p. xii), "shared experience and destiny" (p. 2), "shared memory" (p. 6), "common spaces" (p. 6), the creation of a "common past" (p. 6), groups that "become communities precisely by having shared (if only vicariously) the experiences of their neighbors" (p. 7). The mentality that underlies that process presses historians of collective life to include the study of memory, itself an established discipline, in their methodological repertoire (Kansteiner, 2002). They need explication of collective memory, and, I would say, psychoanalytic explication. I cannot explore this topic in detail here. (On the idea of community, see Bohleber [1997].) One need remember only that the aim of the Nazis was to eliminate Judaism: a people, not just every individual Jew, which was equated with the restoration of the German nation, as in Friedländer's concept of "redemptive anti-Semitism" (Friedländer, 1997/2007, pp. 73-112).

On the second point—avoiding concepts of defence, such as denial—I do not think one can do without the idea of a socially buttressed exclusion or distortion of memory of the perpetration of or complicity with events and attitudes that corrupt a group's identity. (I have previously analyzed the postwar division of Germany as a collective defense against guilt, including the literature on groups as defensive organizations [see Figlio, 2011].) The divergences and conflicts of memory at memorial sites bespeak not just differences of memory: they bespeak the aim of one version to suppress another, thereby contradicting the aim to integrate them into a common memory.

For the historian Charles Maier, "[t]he writing and reading of history must rest upon intellectual sociability," a common effort that can overcome ideological partisanship (1988, p. 63). He believes that the self-reflection required is equivalent to the psychoanalyst's own analysis. I would add that the psychoanalyst's inquiry into defensive "forgetting" must work together with the historian's investigation of the "multiple restorations" of memories (Herf, 1997, pp. 10-11). In Young's example above, the Germans who viewed the pile of corpses as an ironic reflection on their own devastation, and whose only "nexus of identification with Jewish victims lay in the destruction they now seemed to share," were not only drawn to that identification more strongly than to their memory of perpetration: they used it unconsciously to forget the perpetration. Psychoanalytic investigation suggests a defensive forgetting, not just multiple memories based on different experiences. Thus, in Katharine Rothe's (2009) extensive, psychoanalytically informed exploration of memories from the Nazi period, one interviewee reported on having watched a film in the immediate postwar period, probably made by the Americans, which included a "corpse mountain" in a concentration camp. He claimed he could detect a fraud in the scenes of apparently Jewish victims, in which he saw, in fact, a German corpse mountain from the bombing of Hamburg by the Allies (pp. 119-144). Germans, not Jews, were the victims in the war. The detection of fraud was a defense, not just another memory.

Similarly, in an extensive study of German memorials of expulsion, Luppes (2010) argues that the memorials carry a

political message: that Germans were the innocent victims of the loss of homeland at the end of the war. He writes of an "aesthetics of innocence" and notes the large number of monuments that feature women and children as emblems of undisputed innocence. He grants that many Germans expelled from neighbouring territories were innocent, but nonetheless he criticizes the de-contextualized presentation of suffering from 1945, a suffering imposed on the Germans as if an enormity committed against innocence.

We are speaking, not just of forgetting, but of a *wish*—unconscious—to forget. As Young states, "[t]o the extent that we encourage monuments to do our memory-work for us, we become that much more forgetful. In effect, the initial impulse to memorialize events like the Holocaust may actually spring from an opposite and equal desire to forget them" (1993, p. 5). And individuals do not forget on their own: they group together—coalesce—to forget. Furthermore, in the collective act of forgetting, in the very process—in the memorializing—of remembering and rebuilding a collective identity, perpetrators forget defensively.

Memorials as symbols capture the movement towards and away from reconciliation, and they touch raw nerves. They are, in particular, seen as evidence of intention. Indeed, the more innocuous and agreeable the manifest message, the more clues are sought to the latent message. They become either the truest expression of reconciliation or the most suspect expression of malice. In the post-1945 German context, they have been the foci of discord in the midst of overt and public dedication to overcoming the Nazi blight on collective memory. This discord suggests an intense need to uncover the motives that lurk in the underground of a culture.

Although the historians' debate may have been of its time (Maier, 1988, p. 7), the ambiguity and ambivalence continues. This paper will examine the reparative aspect of this ambivalence of memory—commonly called a mastering of the past, a V*ergangenheitsbewältigung*—evidenced in memorials, where the ambivalence is still alive (Beattie, 2006; Maier, 1997; Kurthen, Bergman, & Erb, 1997). I argue that this joint process of remembering and forgetting can be understood psychoanalytically as

reparation and manic reparation, that is, reparation in conflict with itself. Thinking of memory as reparation—reviving the past through a benign and restorative relationship to it—manic reparation embodies the ambiguous, ambivalent, conflicted impulse to assert a falsifying, forgetting, or distorting memory against restorative memory.

The Ambiguity of Reparation in Memory and Memorials

One of the most moving embodiments of reparation towards the Jews, of universal suffering, and also of the dilution of the specific atrocity of the Holocaust, is the sculpture *Mother with Her Dead Son* by Käthe Kollwitz (Fig. 1). It is housed in Berlin in the Neue Wache (the New Guardhouse) a neo-classical building designed by Karl Friedrich Schinkel in 1816 for the troops of the Crown Prince of Prussia. Used as a memorial in the German Democratic Republic, which dedicated it to the victims of fascism and militarism, the Neue Wache is now a memorial in reunified Germany. The Kollwitz statue was placed there after unification and re-dedicated, in a ceremony officiated by Chancellor Kohl, to all victims of war.

Outside the memorial is a moving dedication of the Neue Wache, adapted from a speech by the West German Federal President, Richard von Weizäcker, on the fortieth anniversary of the end of the war. Weizäcker's speech began:

> Today we commemorate in sadness all dead of the war and the tyranny.
> We remember especially the six million Jews who were killed in German concentration camps.

By comparison, the words of the memorial demonstrate the conflicted memories lying just beneath the surface of German self-consciousness:

> The Neue Wache is a place of remembrance and commemoration of the victims of war and tyranny.
> We remember all nations/peoples who suffered in war.

Figure 1. Käthe Kollwitz, *Mother with Her Dead Son*, Neue Wache, Berlin.

For Harold Marcuse, historian of German memorials, there should be no simplification either of the complex situation of a reunified Germany struggling with its past or of the use of Kollwitz to represent it:

> Kollwitz was a socialist artist, close to the proletariat. She was ridiculed by the Nazis…And she is unquestionably one of Germany's greatest artists…She created this sculpture in 1937, twenty years [after her son's death in the First World War]. In her diary she wrote: *"The mother sits and has the dead son lying between her knees. It is no longer pain, but reflection."* Later she added: it is "*a kind of Pietà. But the mother is not religious…She is an old, lonely and darkly reflecting woman.*" (translation of the dedications and diary in Marcuse, 1997, n.p., emphasis in original)

Marcuse continues:

> This mother is not displaying the martyred body of her dead son, but is enveloping it, taking it back into her womb. She is not merely *mourning*, she is filled with *regret*, with the wish to be able to do it over again differently…The only appropriate relationship for Germans to the Nazi past, I think, is sadness and regret. That is well expressed by Kollwitz's sculpture. (n.p., emphasis in original)

In Marcuse's view, symbols themselves do not do the work needed to achieve an appropriate relationship to the past. He writes, "[If] Helmut Kohl or his successor kisses the ground at Yad Vashem [the Israeli Holocaust Memorial], as Brandt knelt in Warsaw in 1970 [and] [i]f Netanyahu came to the Neue Wache afterwards, I would have a more positive assessment of the role of symbolic politics in forging a more peaceful world." Memorials do not perform this work of reparation—akin to *Aufarbeitung* or *Durcharbeitung* rather than *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* (mastering the past)—but they recognize the fact of it, and sadness and regret are part of reparation.

We might think of the Neue Wache memorial as a sculpture of a collective mind. It portrays humanity and worthy memories, but also an avoidance of memories of inhumanity. Regardless of the intention of the artist, it reflects a hope for a unified German future, but also a dissonance in German collective consciousness that can be traced from shortly after the war and into the present. In 1949, the Christian Democrat Konrad Adenauer, running for office as the first chancellor of the new Federal Republic of Germany, decided that Germany could have democracy or memory of the Nazi period, but not both. Put bluntly, he would lose if he favored memory (Herf, 1997, pp. 267-300). In 1950, he demanded of the Allies sovereignty for the Federal Republic of Germany, an apology for slandering Germany, release of German war criminals, and an apology to German soldiers. In 2004, the Central Council of Jews suspended participation in the Foundation for Saxon Memorial Sites, which administered memorials to the victims

of Nazi and Communist persecution, because the foundation tended to equate Nazi with Communist crimes (Beattie, 2006, p. 147). This reaction has to be seen in the context of discord over a motion put to the German parliament by the conservative CDU, which alleged that insufficient attention was paid to Communist tyranny and that there should be commemoration of victims of both "totalitarian dictatorships."

It is not surprising that memorials have stirred intense controversy. Remembrance includes recognition of an immense German suffering, which in Andreas Hillgruber's (1986) account was an unimaginable, overwhelming experience inflicted by the indiscriminate Soviet onslaught on civilians and soldiers alike. It also includes accounts of the bombing of Dresden by the British and Americans. But the denunciation of the Allies for bombing Dresden began with Nazi propaganda during the war and an annual commemoration includes a long-standing apologetic line, seeking to mitigate responsibility for Nazi atrocities and to bring the Nazi period into the post-war historical narrative without accepting these atrocities (see Niven, 2006). Creating images out of context, divorced from the history of the Holocaust, Hillgruber (1986) and the nationalist remembrance of Dresden (see Fuchs, 2012) serve apologetic aims.

In Dresden, ambivalence at a memorial site stands out starkly in the form of an event, the annual commemoration of the bombing of Dresden on February 13-14, 1945; a site, the Frauenkirche in the town center, along with the Heidefriedhoff (Heath Cemetery) on the outskirts of the city; and a monument, to the victims of the bombing in the Heidefriedhoff. Here, polarization is often extreme, so that the nature of the ambivalence becomes even clearer. The bombing caused a firestorm and completely destroyed the center of the city. There are debates about the justification of the attack, which killed approximately 25,000 people, many incinerated. In the remaining days of the war, along with the commemoration that has continued to gather complex and conflicted motives around it ever since, the Nazis added a '0' to this figure and used the killing of 250,000 people to accuse the Allies of aiming to destroy Germany, and in that way shift the charge of atrocity on to them (Evans, 2002, pp. 157-192). Every year, thousands of

people still gather to remember their loss, an event that, since 1949, has included a performance of Rudolf Mauersberger's *Dresdner Requiem* in the Frauenkirche. But a requiem, though mournful, also elevates the destruction of the city, along with the destructiveness of the Nazis, to a spiritual plane, creating an ambiguous atmosphere of tragedy. Along with mourning the victims of Nazi atrocity and Allied bombing, the Nazi past erupts in an annual neo-Nazi invasion of the commemorations redolent of Leni Riefenstahl's 1935 *Triumph of the Will*: "the hooded tops with slogans such as Weisse Wille" (the will of whites); the banners referring to the 'bombing holocaust'; or indeed the red, white and black flags waved during the Third Reich" (Pidd, 2012, February 24, p. 25).

The annual commemoration also takes place in the Heidefriedhof. Part of the cemetery, redesigned and dedicated to those who died in the attack, contains several memorials, one of which is a plain, stone, slightly curved wall resting on a flagstone base at the end of a long pathway (Fig. 2). One can walk towards it from a distance and stand in front of it in silent remembrance. A poem by Max Zimmerling—a poet who fled both Nazi and Soviet persecution but returned to the GDR—is inscribed on the wall. The dedication reads:

> How many died? Who knows their number?
> In your wounds we can see the agony
> Of the nameless who here burned
> In hellfire at the hand of man
> In memory of the victims
> Of the air attack on
> Dresden 13–14 February 1945[2]

Survivors and their succeeding generations come to this memorial, many lay wreaths. The memorial, as well as the city of Dresden, has become a memorial shrine. Perhaps it has become a memorial site because, along with its being a site of mourning, it has gathered conflicted sentiment, beginning with anti-Allied Nazi and GDR propaganda, then opposition from the anti-Nazi peace movement (while the bombing was horrific, Dresden did not stand out from many other German

Figure 2. Heidefriedhof memorial, Dresden.

cities). Shortly after the end of the war, albums of photographs of Dresden and other cities, showing the city before and after the war, began to appear. Some of these books, such as Fritz Löffler's *Das alte Dresden*, had extensive and multiple print runs, suggesting an intense interest (see Fuchs, 2012; Peter, 1949). This genre of "rubble photography" portrayed the utter devastation of Dresden, but in its visual factuality, removed from its historical context, it created a trans-historical, nostalgic, forlorn, mournful sense of loss. That loss, however, could immediately be transformed, through photographs of a reconstructed Dresden, into a future in ambiguous relationship with the past. Was loss to be continuously re-evoked? Was it to be forgotten, having been overcome by progress, as if by magic or by the will of the people? Was it to be politicized as part of the anti-Western attitude of the socialist GDR? Dresden became, and remains, a symbol that condenses motivations that run from the peace movement at one extreme to neo-Nazism at the other.

In this ambiguous function the two processes of reparation and manic reparation are at work. The public commemorations offer an occasion not only for individual mourning, with its base in reparation, but also for a group process, one that reinforces nationalism and triumphalism.

The poem on Dresden's commemorative wall reads, "In

your wounds we can see the agony," using the personal, singular "your" (*An deinen Wunden*). The individuals—"who knows their number?"—become the mass of "the nameless who here burned." In this mass, the loss of the beautiful city and its good people, which included the Jews, is denied, despite the overt mourning. The mourned object and mourners merge, to be killed, by the Allies. The ego's self-abasing plaint is seen in the rubble and in the *Dresdener Requiem.* In a manic swing, Dresdeners, by an unconscious identification with the Nazis, triumph over the victims of the Holocaust and of the bombing as the demeaned object.

The primitive identification of the mourner with the object of mourning and the narcissistic superiority that shows through the mourning are mass phenomena. The individual citizens become the nameless victims of Allied burning, disintegrating into a mass, losing any trace of individuality. We then remember that the multitude of people who were first made nameless by incineration were the victims of the Holocaust. There is no mention of them. We glimpse this distortion of mourning as an undercurrent in the substantial gathering of right-wing, including neo-Nazi, groups that with their bellowing triumphalism invade and try to possess the peaceful, remembering mourners. Through this manic mechanism, they aim to make the mourners into a mass object that, now disparaged and demeaned, diminishes their loss of the beautiful city-object, which included the Jews.

Thousands of people come to the commemorations, many with the aim of marginalizing the right-wing groups. In his remembrance speech for the victims of the bombing, delivered on September 13 , 2011, the city's deputy mayor Detlef Sittel said:

> When we remember them today, we do it in the knowledge of the nights and days in which, previously, Warsaw, Rotterdam and Coventry were turned to rubble and ash by German bombers…In these hours, 66 years ago, the few remaining Dresden Jews were rounded up, to be transported to a death camp. In these hours, 66 years ago, in Dresden, were ever more young Germans drilled for the war, weapons, [and] instruments of war,

grenades, produced…Fanaticism, hate songs and hollow slogans shame the memory of the dead…Right here, at the graves of the victims, we declare: Dresden wants reconciliation and Dresden lives reconciliation. (Sittel, 2011, author's translation)

The success of mourning and the reparative drive to remember depend on an ability to manage these memories and the guilt that they would evoke. It includes an identification with the lost object in which love and the capacity to live together predominate.

What I call public mourning and manic reparation gives into the ambivalence: the world becomes persecutory, filled with retaliatory objects that have to be killed, and killed again, to avoid another round of guilt. Such ambivalence is clear in the rubble photography. One of these books, *Gesang im Feuerofen. Köln: Überreste einer deutshen Stadt* (*Song in the Fire Oven. Cologne: Remains of a German City*) promulgates a redemptive myth based on identifying the German people with the Jews. It asserts German victimization by equating Allied bombing with the Nazi attempt to exterminate the Jews, and it appropriates from the Jews the invincibility bestowed on them by their God, in their emerging from the fiery oven in the Old Testament Book of Daniel (see Fuchs, 2012). Not only was German suffering equated to Jewish suffering: more concretely, the incinerated German was the incinerated Jew; the invincible German replaced the invincible Jew, taking the envied nature of the Jew and eliminating the impurity of the German.

The intrusion into the Dresden commemorations by Neo-Nazis aims to turn mourning, with its undercurrent of ambivalence, guilt, and reparation, into a call to arms. They march with banners that speak of never forgetting, but it is the triumphalism of the manic position that is not, for them, to be forgotten. Their narcissistic zeal does not mourn lost lives, cities, and pride, nor aim for reparation, but instead brings back the nationalistic superiority of the Nazis. With commemoration comes the inclination either to find a way to live with the past in mourning and reparation or to succumb to a manic avoidance that resembles mourning and reparation but remains triumphal over them.

Reparation and Identification

In the decades after 1945, remembering in Germany has reflected an acute sensitivity about the intentions behind symbols of reparation. In particular, this sensitivity has stemmed from ambivalence and from an undercurrent of anti-reparative feeling beneath the dedicated reparative aim towards the Jews. Reparation—in contrast to manic reparation, which is a form of evasion of reparation—derives from the guilt-driven urge to repair the good object (see Hinshelwood, 1991, pp. 412–416; Klein, 1937/1992, pp. 311–313; Klein, 1940/1992, pp. 348–349). Reparative thinking is premised on the idea of the existence of an internal world, in which a relationship is formed between oneself and an object of concern. I say "internal" world, to convey this idea that an other has come into one's sphere in such a way as to stir a feeling of responsibility—and associated guilt—towards it.

Reparation is not accountability in a juridical sense but acceptance of responsibility in psychic reality. It is an aspect of the "depressive position," an internal psychic moment in which an internal good object is experienced as damaged by the ego and in which "depressive anxiety" at the state of the object arouses an urge to repair it (see Klein, 1935/1992; Klein, 1940/1992; Hinshelwood, 1991, pp. 138–155). Guilt is intrinsic to reparation. The object remains blemished and can never again be as it was, so the reparative process remains incomplete. Sadness at the loss of the object and remorse at the attack upon it engrave themselves into the psyche. One might say that the object eventually is *found* to be good, as a *discovery* rather than as an achievement—something we notice when we stand back and attend to what *has* happened, and is likely to happen, to the object. I think that this state of "found to be good" is a form of Klein's idea of gratitude (1957/1992) and that hope is an appropriate word for an anticipation of it (Hinshelwood, 2007, p. 202).

This understanding can be applied at the social level, without having to assume that society is a subject or agent and therefore acts in such a way as to cause it to feel guilty. In psychic reality, as it appears in the clinical process, guilt

evokes reparation. Evidence of reparative intention is therefore also evidence of guilt. Similarly, a national purposiveness in reparative activity gives evidence of national guilt and also of the urge to recover a convergent memory from the shards and distortions of memory. Political accounts of this reparative activity are needed to understand post-1945 Germany, but such accounts also require the language of perpetration, guilt, defense, and reparation.

What is the object and motive of reparation? C. Fred Alford (2006) aims to show that there is an ethical imperative at the root of reparation (see also Vetlesen, 2005, pp. 104–144). Alford argues for a "reparative natural law" that would provide a foundation for a natural law of ethics and that would be incomplete if it did not garner an ethical commitment to the actual victims of unethical behaviour. Without the honing of commitment by generations of social life, it would remain an abstract force that could as well drive an aesthetic, even narcissistic, preoccupation as inspire a concern to improve the situation of people who suffer.

I agree that one needs to distinguish between concern for the object and the narcissism of feeling good, but I will stress here the importance of internal objects in relation to external objects. The commitment of successive German governments to make good the damage inflicted in the Nazi period provides an example of embedding a reparative attitude into social life. Nonetheless, reparation takes its own path, and does not easily translate into action. Reparation is based on an identification between ego and object, perpetrator and victim, which is rooted in depressive concern for the object. More loving than doing, making the object better involves making the ego-perpetrator better (a topic intensively explored by Schwab [2010]). Ego and object impart beneficence to each other. By contrast, narcissistic identification is not properly an identification, but swells up with pride, while secretly denigrating the object. In that sense it is manic.

Clinical psychoanalysis examines the details of the reparative process, offering thereby perhaps the deepest insight into its nature. As an example, I choose the following clinical vignette published by the French psychoanalyst Haydee Faimberg (2005)

from the case of an intergenerational transmission of trauma, in this instance passed from a father during the Nazi period to his son, in analysis with Faimberg. I have condensed the narrative of a session into a diagram of the reparative process in relation to identification (Fig. 3). The interpretation is mine.[3]

The analysand, Mario, seemed almost lifeless for some time in his analysis. In the background was his father, a Polish refugee (presumably from the Nazis) in Argentina. Father had sent money during the war to support his natal family in Poland, but to no avail, the implication being that they had perished. Now, in his analysis, Mario speaks of (re)discovering that his mother had a sister who had been "forgotten" and left in a mental hospital:

> I asked my mother about Auntie Rita. [Mother] was quite surprised at my knowing of her existence and asked me how I knew about her. I remembered her. I don't know if I had always remembered her, but in the last few years I realized I knew about her. My mother told me that Rita was confined to a psychiatric hospital. I asked her how long ago had she been sent there and she told me it had happened when she (my mother) was expecting my brother. I was five at the time. My mother never went to see my aunt and never talked about her…I found out where she was and I asked my brother, who is a doctor, to see if she was well taken care of. I have been visiting her, telling her all that has happened in the twenty-five years she has been isolated from the world. I've taught her to wash [he said, pointing to his own shoes that for the first time looked clean] and I've set myself as an example. (Faimberg, 2005, pp. 13–14)

Note the background: the patient's father, as *his* father's son, tried to make his father and father's family better, a reparative task unconsciously taken on by Mario as his own son. Mario brings his aunt into his memory. His mother and her sister together represent a mother who had lost her memory and her self-esteem. In getting in touch with his aunt, then, Mario brings his aunt as mother and himself as son together. Furthermore,
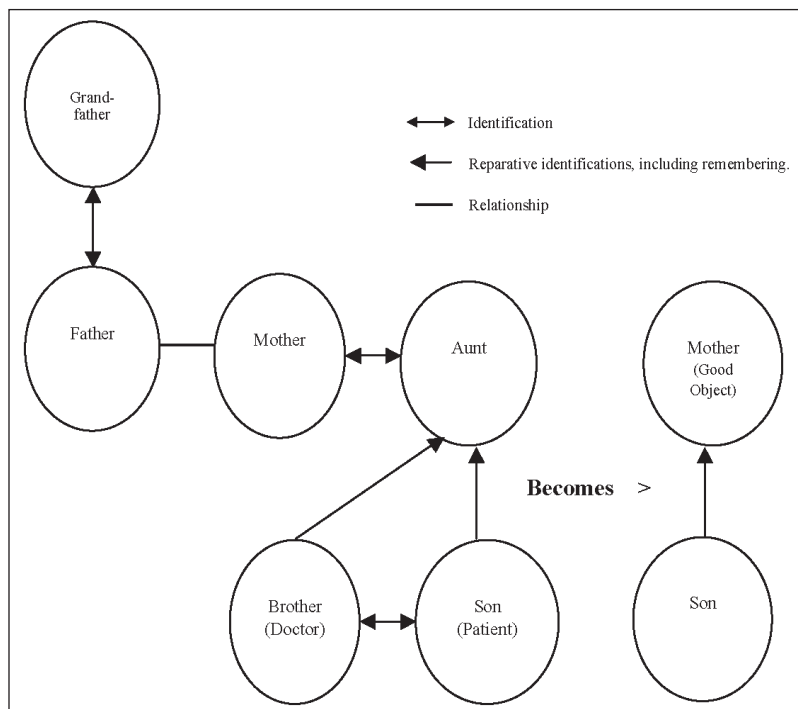
Figure 3. Diagram based on Faimberg (2005).

"son" is divided between himself and his brother, a doctor who is enlisted to make mother better. In bringing "mother" and "son" back together, mother's memory is also restored. It is a reparative scenario, in which mother—the patient's good internal object—is looked after, made better. In his repeated references to her, she was *remembered*, and the making better, including being remembered, restores the mother's internal world, repairing her self-esteem and her missing memory.

The reparative process in this case was based on identifications. In the beginning of the analysis, the patient was almost lifeless, but he remembered his aunt, got in touch with her and in the process not only came alive himself but also brought her, as "mother," alive. Sent to a mental hospital during mother's pregnancy, his aunt had been destroyed as a mother. The mother's pregnancy had been attacked—a primal attack on her reproductive capacity. The two sons, together,

represent her son, in both a *doing* mode (the doctor) and a *loving* mode (the patient): "he" as son draws her as mother into identification with "his" restorative character. Guilt for the attack on maternal reproductive capacity drives the reparation. Stated in a condensed formulation, a son-ego felt impelled to repair a damaged-mother-object and the means of reparation became identification between a getting-better ego and a getting-better object.

In this form of identification—introjective identification—the ego and object are brought together, each enriched by the process. By contrast, in projective identification, the ego intrudes a part of itself into the object, both to control the object through this part-ego and to evacuate this part-ego from the ego. Klein offers a clinical example; a patient reported the following dream:

> He was in an upstairs flat and "X", a friend of his, was calling him from the street suggesting a walk together… The patient did not join "X", because a black dog in the flat might get out and be run over. He stroked the dog. When he looked out of the window, he found that "X" had receded. (Klein, 1957/1992, p. 227)[4]

In Klein's interpretation, the friend, X, is a part of the patient, an aggressive part that recedes from him. X takes with him the patient's aggressive danger to the dog-analyst, who must be protected, stroked, by the ego that stays behind in the flat. The patient's aggression is managed by projective identification into X; that is, X is identified with, and controlled by, the part-ego that has been projected into him, forming a part-ego-object unit under part-ego control, which is moved into the distance, carrying the ego's aggression with it. The bulk of the ego, now freed of aggression, protects the dog-analyst.

In this case, the menace to the ego was the aggression that would target the object, evoking guilt and a depressive reaction in the ego. This patient's concern for the analyst was near the surface. The scenario approaches a wish for reconciliation between the ego and object and between the ego and its aggressiveness. Here, introjective identification holds ego and

object, as well as aggression, together, in that the patient can represent the situation to himself in the internal scene of the dream. In other cases, however, hatred seethes self-destructively inside the ego. In such instances, projective identification, reinforced by an annihilating attack on the part-ego-object aims at extinguishing the hated aspect. The attack on the object saves the perpetrator, something that happens in the manic phase of manic-depression or in murder as an unconscious alternative to suicide (Williams, 1998, pp. 41–51). In virulent cases, the object of projective identification must be annihilated in order to eliminate the internal aggression that otherwise could overwhelm the ego.

Conclusion: Manic Reparation and the Ambivalence in Memorials

We can align introjective and projective identification with reparation and manic reparation, respectively. Reparation is driven by concern for the good object, guilt at its damage, and the urge to restore it by introjective—that is, inclusive—identification with the good ego. It reflects the hope that the good object might be restored. By contrast, manic reparation, as described by Hannah Segal (1981, pp. 147–158), aims to keep the object of reparation under control and idealizes the "repairing" agent. Projective identification, that is, an identification between the part-ego and the object, alienated from the main ego, drives it psychologically. Belief in magical restoration of the object—the other side of magical control over its life and death—evidences the narcissistic grandeur of the main ego and its contempt for the object. This belief recalls the Nazi pairing of redemption of the German nation with the debasement and annihilation of the Jewish people and culture (see Friedländer, 1997/2007, pp. 73–112).[5]

Memorials that symbolize reparative intentions can also be sites of tension between reparative, introjective assimilation of a past of perpetration and a manic-reparative, projective identification with "enemies," including, in the German case, Jews, capitalists and communists—indeed, Jews *as* capitalists

and communists (Friedländer, 1997/2007, pp. 91–95, 178, 180-189, 310–311). Making-good in post-war Germany has included nationalism and magical restoration, which has infiltrated the reparative urges towards the damaged object. Thus the FRG's economic miracle was not only a material success but also a magical creation of a new history. Sebald (2003), who reproduced rubble photographs from the period, felt troubled by people who seemed out of touch with the horror, offering bland accounts of everyday postwar life or seeing in the devastated cityscapes the dawn of a new age. In psychoanalytic language, they appeared manic in their denial of destruction and in their phantasy of magical restoration.

In the case of manic reparation, the ego fears annihilation with any relaxing of control over the object, whereas with reparation, the ego and the object dwell together in gratitude. The Jew in the German mind has thus oscillated between polar opposites: on the one hand, the Jew as an encroaching internal object, firing a demand that German victimhood by the aggression of the Jews and the Allies be recognized and accepted as equivalent to Jewish victimhood, and on the other, the Jew as a fully German citizen, the recipient of an earnest public commitment to reparation.

These two forms of identification are alloyed in memorials, experienced particularly in the sensitivity over memorials that embrace all victims of war. At a conscious level, it seems grudging not to commemorate all victims of war: memorials imply an (introjective) identification among sufferers, and with it, an emotional kinship that is the root of understanding and reconciliation. But the perpetrator can disappear, as in the adaptation of Weizäcker's 1985 speech for the Neue Wache memorial. "We remember especially the six million Jews who were killed in German concentration camps" became "We remember all nations/peoples who suffered in war." Equating suffering German soldiers with suffering Jews evades the guilt of the perpetrator of the Holocaust. The perpetrator has become invisible, arousing an uncanny sense that it is still stalking somewhere.

In psychoanalytic language, what underlies the sensitivity over memorials and memory in general is that reparative

behavior becomes infiltrated with a manic-reparative intention that retains nationalistic fervor and "redemptive anti-Semitism." Perceived external reality is infused with internal reality; in particular, with a primitive form of object relations, in which German perpetration disappears into German suffering through a concrete equation with Jewish suffering. Even "suffering" is too complex a term: the piles of corpses in photographs become at the same time Jews and Germans, a concrete identity that Hannah Segal called a "symbolic equation" (1981, pp. 49-68). The dead, nameless Jew in such an equation becomes not only the dead German but also the living German, magically restored from the identity with the dead Jew. [6] This kind of so-called reparation stalks authentic reparation.

This difference in mode of identification—introjective or projective—drives remembering and reparation towards either convergent memory rooted in objectifying debate and reparation, or towards evasive, illusory, partisan memory and manic reparation. One can understand the need for nations to construct "good" memories, but they have to come from a truthfulness in line with introjective identification—an ego enriched by its objects while restoring those objects. Renovation built on magical restoration—built on the rubble of a denigrated object—is, in psychoanalytic terms, a manic defense. It comprises a phantasied omnipotence, surrounded in a glow of self-idealization and rooted in the agent's contempt for the object of its manipulation. The capacity to sustain such an illusory world may be grounded in horrific acts that "prove" its omnipotence and in the subtle subterfuge of distorted memory.

The psychoanalytic distinction between reparation and manic reparation refers to a fundamental differentiation between states of mind that can, at the descriptive level, seem the same. In reparation, the ego and the object get better, in introjective identification. In manic reparation, the superiority of the ego over the object is retained as an illusion, along with the withdrawal from ordinary memory and history. Such illusory superiority becomes sensitive to the smallest challenge: any divergence from illusion represents not just interference from actual, perceptual reality but a deflation of narcissism. Memorials as sites of reparation, where memory could be

healed, fracture when claimed by groups in conflict with each other, some with triumphalism in mind rather than reparative intent. The preservation of narcissism in manic reparation, from which the slightest deviation is a catastrophic collapse, demands a cut-off, a termination, in the futile wish to keep the ideal by cutting off the object of reparation, which constantly exposes a false ideal. Reparation has no endpoint, no moment to declare, "That is enough." Indeed, the question of "when is it enough" betrays the intention to have done with reparative memory in an absolute sense and signals the manic solution of projective identification as the means of purifying the national ego.

Notes

1. See Klein (1937/1992, pp. 311–313; 1940/1992, pp. 348–349) and Segal (1981, pp. 147–158).
2. This poem has various translations, and I have modified them, but they do not capture the rhythm and power of the German original:

    > Wieviele starben? Wer kennt die Zahl?
    > An deinen Wunden sieht man die Qual
    > der namelosen, die hier verbrannt
    > im Höllen feuer aus Menschenhand

3. For a fuller interpretation, together with interpretations by other authors, see Figlio (2012).
4. For further discussion of this example, see Hinshelwood (1994, p. 125).
5. Although Klein stressed the aggressiveness of projective identification, she also spoke of projection of good parts of the ego (1946/1992). It is not usual to align introjective identification with an enrichment of the ego through a healthy, loving assimilation of the object, and projective identification with the hating expulsion of destructive parts of the ego into the object, which becomes the "bad ego." It is also not usual to base reparation on introjective identification and manic reparation on projective identification. I cannot argue the theoretical case here, but only suggest that assimilation and reparation are loving, and expulsion and manic reparation as triumph over the object are hating. It tallies with Freud's original formulation, in which the ego takes in what is good and makes it part of the ego, and expels what is bad and makes it into the alien object world. Introjective identification/reparation brings the ego and object together; projective identification/manic reparation keeps them separate, and asserts the superiority of the ego over the denigrated object, as in Freud's account of a manic state (Freud, 1917 [1915], p. 257). In the former, the ego, in its "getting-better" state, recognizes goodness in the object; in the latter, the ego feels good because it has intruded its disphoria into the object. Any goodness in the object incites envy and prolongs a grudge.
6. The more primitive and concrete the object relations, the more "akin" or "similar" or "equivalent" become "identical." The more that is the case, the more the suffering of the fourteen million Germans who were expelled from their homes after the Second World War become identical to German soldiers killed in action, and they, in turn become identical to the fallen SS at Bitburg, and they become identical to all expelled people; and they all become identical to the Jews who were murdered in death camps. Paradoxically, Jews are capitalists and communists. The more the differences are elided, the more a perpetrator

is on the loose and the more the Jews themselves become the perpetrators (See also Herf, 2006). In this paranoid world of primitive object relations, the ego is always in danger of annihilation, as it lives in an illusion that it can invincibly annihilate all enemies.

References

Adorno, T. (1959/2010). The meaning of working through the past. In *Guilt and defense: On the legacies of National Socialism in post-war Germany* (pp. 213-228). J. Olick & A. Perrin (Eds. & Trans.). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Alford, C.F. (2006). *Psychology and the natural law of reparation.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Baranowski, S. (2011). *Nazi empire: German colonialism and imperialism from Bismarck to Hitler.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bartov, O. (1998). Defining enemies, making victims: Germans, Jews, and the Holocaust. *American Historical Review, 103*(3), 771–816.

Beattie, A. (2006). The victims of totalitarianism and the centrality of Nazi genocide: Continuity and change in German commemorative politics. In B. Niven (Ed.), *Germans as victims: Remembering the past in contemporary Germany* (pp. 147-163). Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan.

Bergmann, W. (1997). Antisemitism and xenophobia in Germany since unification. In H. Kurthen, W. Bergmann, & R. Erb (Eds.), *Antisemitism and xenophobia in Germany after unification* (pp. 21–38). New York: Oxford University Press.

Bohleber, W. (1997). Die Konstruktion imaginärer Gemeinschaften und das Bild von den Juden: Unbewusste Determinanten des Antisemitismus in Deutschland. *Psyche, 51,* 570-605.

Broszat, M., & Friedländer, S. (1988). A controversy about the historicization of National Socialism. *New German Critique, 44, Special Issue on the Historikerstreit,* 85–126.

Eley, G. (1988). Nazism, politics and the image of the past: Thoughts on the West German Historikerstreit 1986-1987. *Past and Present, 21,* 171-208.

Evans, R. (2002). *Telling lies about Hitler: The Holocaust, history and the David Irving trial.* London: Verso.

Faimberg, H. (2005). *The telescoping of generations: Listening to the narcissistic links between generations.* London: Routledge.

Figlio, K. (2011). A psychoanalytic reflection on collective memory as a psychosocial enclave: Jews, German national identity, and splitting in the German psyche. *International Social Science Journal, 203/204,* 161–78.

Figlio, K. (2012). Devaluing and repairing the internal world. *Psychoanalysis, Culture and Society, 17*(1), 87–91.

Freud, S. (1917 [1915]). Mourning and melancholia. *Standard Edition* (Vol. 14, pp. 237–258). London: Hogarth Press.

Friedländer, S. (1997/2007). *The years of persecution: Nazi Germany & the Jews 1933–1939.* London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson/Phoenix.

Fuchs, A. (2012). *After the Dresden bombing: Pathways of memory, 1945 to the present.* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Hartman, G. (Ed.). (1986). *Bitburg in moral and political perspective.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Herf, J. (1997). *Divided memory: The Nazi past in the two Germanies.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Herf, J. (2006). *The Jewish enemy: Nazi propaganda during World War II and the Holocaust.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Hillgruber, A. (1986). *Zweierlei Untergang: die Zerschlagung des deutschen Reiches und das Ende des europäischen Judentums.* Berlin: Siedler.

Hinshelwood, R. (1991). *A dictionary of Kleinian thought* (2nd ed.). London: Free Association Books.

Hinshelwood, R. (1994). *Clinical Klein.* London: Free Association Books.

Hinshelwood, R. (2007). Review of *Psychology and the natural law of reparation*, by C. Alford. *Psychoanalysis, Culture and Society, 12*(2), 199–202.

Kansteiner, W. (2002). Finding meaning in memory: A methodological critique of collective memory studies. *History and Theory, 42*(2), 179-97.

Klein, M. (1935/1992). A contribution to the psychogenesis of manic-depressive states. In *Love, guilt and reparation and other works 1921-1945: The writings of Melanie Klein* (Vol. 1, pp. 262–89). London: Karnac and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis.

Klein, M. (1937/1992). Love, guilt and reparation. In *Love, guilt and reparation and other works 1921-1945: The writings of Melanie Klein* (Vol. 1, pp. 306–43). London: Karnac and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis.

Klein, M. (1940/1992). Mourning and its relation to manic-depressive states. In *Love, guilt and reparation and other works 1921-1945: The writings of Melanie Klein* (Vol. 1, pp. 344–69). London: Karnac and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis.

Klein, M. (1946/1992). Notes on some schizoid mechanisms. In *Love, guilt and reparation and other works 1921-1945: The writings of Melanie Klein* (Vol. 3, pp. 1–24). London: Karnac and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis.

Klein, M. (1957/1992). Envy and gratitude. In *Love, guilt and reparation and other works 1921-1945: The writings of Melanie Klein* (Vol. 3, pp. 176–235). London: Karnac and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis.

Knowlton, J., & Cates, T. (Trans.). (1993). *Forever in the shadow of Hitler?: The dispute about the Germans' understanding of history, original documents of the Historikerstreit, the controversy concerning the singularity of the Holocaust.* Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press.

Kurthen, H., Bergmann, W., & Erb, R. (Eds). (1997). *Antisemitism and xenophobia in Germany after unification.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Legge, J. (2003). *Jews, Turks, and other strangers.* Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

Luppes, J. (2010). *To our dead: Local expellee monuments and the contestation of German postwar memory.* (Unpublished doctoral thesis). University of Michigan.

Lupu, N. (2003). Memory vanished, absent, and confined: The countermemorial project in the 1980s and 1990s. *History and Memory, 15*(2), 130-164.

Maier, C. (1988). *The unmasterable past: History, Holocaust, and German national identity.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Marcuse, H. (1997). The Berlin national memorial to the victims of war and tyranny: From conflict to consensus. Paper presented to the *German Studies Association Conference,* September 25, 1997, Washington, DC. Retrieved from http://www.history.ucsb.edu/faculty/marcuse/present/neuewach.htm.

Niven, B. (2006). The GDR and memory of the bombing of Dresden. In B. Niven (Ed.), *Germans as victims: Remembering the past in contemporary Germany* (pp. 109-29). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Nolte, E. (1986/1993.) The past that will not pass: A speech that could be written but not delivered. In J. Knowlton & T. Cates (Trans.). *Forever in the shadow of Hitler?: The dispute about the Germans' understanding of history, original documents of the historikerstreit, the controversy concerning the singularity of the Holocaust* (pp. 18-24). Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press.

Panayi, P. (2001). Racial exclusion in the new Germany. In K. Larres (Ed.), *Germany since unification: The development of the Berlin republic* (2nd ed., pp. 129–48). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Peter, R. (1949). *Eine Kamera klagt an.* Dresden: Desdener Verlagsgesellschaft.

Pidd, H. (2012, February 23). Germany's far right marches out of the shadows. *The Guardian,* p. 25.

Rothe, K. (2009). *Das (Nicht-)Sprechen über die Judenvernichtung: Psychische Weiterwirkungen des Holocaust in mehreren Generationen nicht-jüdischer Deutscher.* Giessen: Psychosozial Verlag.

Schwab, G. (2010). *Haunting legacies: Violent histories and transgenerational trauma.* New York & Chichester: Columbia University Press.

Sebald, W.G. (2003). *On the natural history of destruction.* London: Hamish Hamilton.

Segal, H. (1981). *The works of Hannah Segal: A Kleinian approach to clinical practice.* New York: Jason Aronson.

Sittel, D. (2011). *Rede des Zweiten Bürgermeisters Detlef Sittel auf dem Dresdner Heidefriedhof.* Retrieved from http://www.dresden-fernsehen.de/default. aspx?ID=12095&showNews=929212.

Vetlesen, A. (2005). *Evil and human agency: Understanding collective violence.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Weil, F. (1997). Ethnic intolerance, extremism and democratic attitudes in Germany after unification. In H. Kurthen, W. Bergmann, & R. Erb (Eds.), *Antisemitism and xenophobia in Germany after unification* (pp. 110–42). New York: Oxford University Press.

Williams, A.H. (1998). *Cruelty, violence and murder: Understanding the criminal mind.* London: Karnac.

Young, J. (1993). *The texture of memory*: *Holocaust memorials and meaning.* New Haven: Yale University Press.